

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 04374 191559Z

46

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 OMB-01 PC-04 AID-20 NIC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11

LAB-06 SIL-01 IO-14 FDRE-00 AGR-20 SWF-02 HEW-08

DRC-01 /207 W

----- 120759

P R 191457Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8591

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMCONSUL ASMARA

USCINCEUR

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E.O.11652: NA

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, ET

SUBJ: PRIMIN DIALOGS WITH ARMED FORCES AND POLICE

REF: USINFO WASHDC DTG 181550Z APR 74

1. PRIMIN, FLANKED BY MOD AND IEGF COMMANDER, MET NOON
APRIL 18 AT 4TH DIVISION HQ WITH 2,000 REPRESENTATIVES OF
ARMED FORCES AND POLICE. DIGEST OF PROCEEDINGS CARRIED ON
RADIO/TV THAT EVENING.

2. AFTER PRAISING MILITARY'S RESTRAINT, EXHORTING ASSEMBLED
CADRES NOT TO BETRAY NATION'S TRUST AND URGING THEY CONTINUE
SET WORTHY EXAMPLE, PRIMIN PLEADED FOR TIME DO JOB WITH
WHICH HIS GOVERNMENT ENTRUSTED. HE OUTLINED REFORM EFFORTS
UNDER WAY WHICH REQUIRE PEACE AND SECURITY FOR THEIR SUCCESS;

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PAGE 02 ADDIS 04374 191559Z

WARNED THAT STRIKES AND INDUSTRIAL UNREST DEBILITATING

EMPIRE AND COULD PRECIPITATE POLITICO-ECONOMIC CRISIS,
AND PLEADED THAT GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES PRESENT THEIR
GIEVANCES WITHOUT WORK STOPPAGES.

3. THEREAFTER HE ANSWERED QUESTIONS, INCLUDING FOLLOWING
(GIST):

Q. RE UNITY: YOU SAID THAT CRITERION FOR SELECTING
PEOPLE (TO POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY) WOULD BE PRESERVA-
TION OF UNITY AND ABILITY. IS ABILITY TO BE RESTRICTED TO
CERTAIN TRIBAL GROUPS?

A. UNITY COMES ABOVE ALL ELSE. WE TRIED TO APPOINT
PEOPLE ON BASIS THEIR ABILITY BUT GIVEN TIME CONSTRAINTS
COULD NOT TAKE EVERYTHING INTO CONSIDERATION. TRIBAL AND
RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES ARE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS AND (PM)
HOPES BE ABLE WEIGH ALL FACTORS MORE EQUITABLY IN FUTURE.

Q. WHAT IS ACTION TO BE TAKEN WITH REGARD TO FORMER
OFFICIALS?

A. WE CANNOT ACT HASTILY. SOME ACCUSATIONS AGAINST
THEM ARE BASED ON PERSONAL ANIMOSITY. COMMISSION OF
INQUIRY (CI) IS RIGHT INSTRUMENT. IT WILL DO ITS JOB.

Q. FORMER OFFICIALS ACCUSED OF CORRUPTION ARE FREE;
THEY HAVE NOT BEEN BROUGHT TO TRIAL. WHY NOT? JUSTICE
IS SWIFT FOR THE HUMBLE. AS LONG AS THESE FORMER
OFFICIALS GO FREE THEY WILL ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO EMULATE
THEIR SELF-SERVING WAYS.

A. THE EMPEROR PROMISED YOU THAT ACCUSED FORMER
OFFICIALS WOULD BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE UNDER LAW. THAT'S
WHY WE ESTABLISHED CI. PARLIAMENT WILL VOTE ITS POWERS.
MEANWHILE FORMER OFFICIALS ARE NOT FREE BUT (MUST REMAIN)
IN THEIR HOMES.

(NOTE: THERE WERE REPORTEDLY FOUR QUESTIONS ON THIS
SUBJECT. PRIMIN FINALLY SAID HAVE SHUT THEM OFF BY STATING
HE WOULD BRING THEM TO EMPEROR'S ATTENTION. PUBLIC TENDING
TO READ THIS AS SUBTLE HINT TO AUDIENCE THAT FUTURE OF FORMER
OFFICIALS IS NOT PRIMIN'S OR CI'S BUT EMPEROR'S TO DECIDE.)

Q. MILITARY HAVE BROUGHT PROBLEMS TO MINISTERS AND
OFFICIALS IN PAST WITHOUT RECEIVING ANSWERS. OFFICIALS
UNDER PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION DID NOT WANT LOOK AT CONDITIONS
ON GROUND (E.G., DROUGHT RELATED SUFFERING). IF NEW
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PAGE 03 ADDIS 04374 191559Z

CABINET FOLLOWS THIS PRECEDENT IT COULD END UP LIKE
ITS PREDECESSOR. WILL IT DO BETTER?

A. MINISTER PUBLIC HEALTH AND DROUGHT COORDINATOR HAVE VISITED
DROUGHT AREA. OTHERS WILL FOLLOW AS TIME PERMITS.

Q. FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS YOU WERE CONSIDERING RESIG-
NATION. WHY DIDN'T LOCAL PRESS CARRY THIS?

A. FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS LIE. I WILL WORK HARD TO DO
JOB. BUT IT WILL TAKE TIME.

COMMENT: PER REFTTEL WE UNDERSTAND THAT WIRE SERVICES
READ HAMMER BLOW QUESTIONS ON DISPOSITION FORMER OFFICIALS
AS 4TH DIVISION ULTIMATUM TO ENDALKACHEW CM TRY THEM--OR ELSE.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT PRMIN/MILITARY DIALOG IS NEW DEPARTURE
FOR ETHIOPIA. ONLY EMPEROR (VIZ., NOT CIVIL HIERARCHY) HERE-
TOFORE AUTHORIZED INSTRUCT ARMED FORCES. A MEMBER ENDALKACHEW
CM TOLD EMBOFF THAT THERE FEELING IN GOVERNMENT MILITARY/POLICE
RANK AND FILE SIMPLY DO NOT UNDERSTAND REALITIES WITH WHICH
CABINET WRESTLING AND IT HOPED THEY WILL SUPPORT ITS EFFORTS ONCE
PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED. WYMAN

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